

Appl. No. 10/039,331
Reply to Office Action of March 10, 2005

Docket No. RTN-139PUS

REMARKS

The above-identified patent application has been amended and Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to reconsider and again examine the claims as amended in accordance with the provisions of 37 C.F.R. §1.116.

Claims 1-37 are pending in the application. Claims 34-37 are allowed. Claims 1-7, 9-12, 14, and 17-23 are rejected. Claims 8, 13, 15, and 16 are objected to. Claims 1-3, 4, 8, 9, 12-18, 20, 21, 23-28, 30, 31, 33, and 34 are amended herein. Claims 11, 19, 29, and 32 are canceled herein without prejudice.

The Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

The Examiner rejects Claims 1-7, 9-12, and 17-33 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Johnson et al. (U.S. Patent number 5,553,209) in view of Hayashida et al. (U.S. Patent number 6,067, 502). The Examiner asserts that "Johnson teaches a symbol expansion method and apparatus comprising: selecting a map portion containing one or more map display symbols on a computer map display...wherein one or more map display symbols include...one or more de-cluttered map display symbols, two or more normal map display symbols, and two or more cluttered map display symbols..." The Examiner recognizes that Johnson et al. does not teach a symbol expansion display as claimed. The Examiner relies upon Hayashida et al. as teaching a symbol expansion display. The Examiner concludes that it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to incorporate the symbol expansion display of Hayashida et al. into the map display symbols of Johnson...."

Applicants have amended Claim 1 herein in an effort to improve the clarity as will be apparent, and not for reasons of patentability. Some phrases in Claim 1 have been moved.

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As the Examiner is aware, and as found in MPEP §2142, in order to establish a prima facie case of obviousness "...the prior art reference (or prior art references when combined) must teach or suggest all the claim limitations." Applicants respectfully submit that the Examiner has not met this burden in order to establish prima facie obviousness.

Applicants submit that amended Claim 1 is patentably distinct over Johnson et al., whether taken alone or in combination with Hayashida et al., since the cited references neither describe nor suggest "... selecting...a map portion containing one or more map display symbols, wherein the one or more map display symbols include map display symbols selected from among one or more de-cluttered map display symbols and two or more cluttered map display symbols; and presenting, on the computer map display, in response to the selecting, a symbol expansion display having information associated with the one or more map display symbols, wherein the symbol expansion display is displayed concurrently with the one or more map display symbols," as set forth in amended Claim 1.

The claimed symbol expansion display is shown, for example, as symbol expansion display 60, in FIG. 1A, having one or more symbol expansion graphics (e.g., symbol expansion graphics 62a-62c, FIG. 1A) and/or one or more symbol expansion data (e.g., symbol expansion data 64a-64c, FIG. 1A). It should be understood that when the claimed symbol expansion display is used in conjunction with one or more de-cluttered map display symbols and/or two or more cluttered map display symbols as called for in Claim 1, the symbol expansion display makes information more easily visible, which would otherwise be crowded on the computer map display, or not displayed at all.

Applicants submit that the phrase symbol expansion display is clearly defined in the specification to have a particular meaning. For example, as described on page 7, middle paragraph, and reproduced below, referring to FIG. 1A, the specification states,

...when a symbol or a group of symbols is selected using the pointed device 18, or other means for selecting, the symbol expansion system generates a symbol expansion display. [emphasis added] The symbol expansion display is a tabular list associated with the symbol, group of symbols, or underlying

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symbols. An exemplary symbol expansion display can include symbol expansion graphics, and/or symbol expansion data. [emphasis added] The tabular list can include only one symbol expansion graphic and one symbol expansion data. For example, when the normal map display symbol 22 is selected with the pointing device 18, the symbol expansion system 10 can provide a symbol expansion display 52 that includes a symbol expansion graphic 54 that corresponds to the record graphic 40 that further corresponds to the normal map display symbol 22. The symbol expansion system 10 can also provide a symbol expansion display 52 that includes symbol expansion text or data 56 that corresponds to the record data 42 that further corresponds to data associated with map display symbol 22. For example, the symbol expansion data 56 can indicate the number of troops associated with the map display symbol 22. Additionally, a lead line 58 can be displayed to guide a person viewing the map to visually associate the symbol expansion display 52 with the map display symbol 22.

The Examiner recognizes that Johnson et al. neither describes nor suggests the claimed symbol expansion display. Applicants submit that Hayashida et al. fails to overcome this deficiency. The Examiner uses FIG. 69 of Hayashida et al. to show a symbol expansion display, which Applicants presume to be a "select item" display 412 in a "second screen" 108. However, Applicants submit that the select item display 412 in the second screen 108 of FIG. 69 is not a symbol expansion display as claimed.

The claimed symbol expansion display provides an expanded view of information on a computer map display associated with map display symbols, information which would otherwise be cluttered, unreadable, or not displayed at all. In contrast, Hayashida et al. provides a data list in a split screen, which is used to select a map portion for display and to zoom into a selected region of the map portion, i.e., to expand the map portion.

In particular, as best understood by the Applicants, the system of Hayashida et al. operates in the following manner. Referring to FIG. 68 of Hayashida et al., a user enters a postal code in the second screen 410. Upon selection of the postal code, the display of FIG. 69 is achieved, which shows the postal code as a dashed line 462 in the third screen 110 and a "select item" list 412 in a second screen 108. In the second screen 108 of FIG. 69, a user selects a mode of operation, for example, a mode 420, whereby the user can enter a street

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name. When the mode 420 is selected, the display of FIG. 70 is achieved, which shows a list 424 of all street names associated with the postal code 462 of FIG. 69. In the third screen 110 of FIG. 70, a user selects a street name, for example, a street ABCD. When the street name is selected, for example street name ABCD, the display of FIG. 71 is achieved, which shows a map having the selected street in a third screen 110, and the list 424 of all street names associated with the postal code 462 in a second screen 108. The map shown in the third screen 110 has a scale (i.e., to zoom) selected to clearly show the selected street without excessive clutter.

Applicants submit that the select item list 412 in FIG. 69 of Hayashida et al. is merely a mode selection list from which a user can select. Applicants further submit that the street list 424 of FIG. 71 is merely a list of all streets in a postal code from which a user can select. Applicants submit that neither the select item list 412 of FIG. 69 or the street list 424 of FIG. 71 are a symbol expansion display as claimed.

As described above, in Hayashida et al., in response to selection of a street name in the list 424, a map display is achieved, which presents a selected street at an appropriate scale. This is in complete contrast to the present invention, in which, in response to selection of a map portion containing one or more map display symbols, the symbol expansion display is presented to give further information associated with the map display symbols.

Applicants further submit that Hayashida et al. does not provide a symbol expansion display on the computer map display as claimed. Referring, for example, to FIG. 69 of Hayashida et al., Hayashida et al. teaches a map display in a third screen 110, and other lists in a second screen 108. The second and third screens 108, 110 are split screens. Having the symbol expansion display on the computer map display as claimed, in some embodiments, provides particular advantages, for example, as described below in conjunction with Claims 12 and 14.

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Applicants still further submit that Hayashida et al. teaches away from the present invention. The claimed symbol expansion display provides information about de-cluttered map display symbols and/or cluttered map display symbols, information which would otherwise not be easily viewable. Hayashida et al. provides a map display, for example the map display in the third screen 110 of FIG. 71, which has a scale selected to expand (i.e., to zoom) the map display to show a selected street. The scale is selected to avoid cluttered map display symbols and to avoid the necessity for de-cluttered map display symbols, which are recited in Claim 1.

Furthermore, as the Examiner is aware, and as found in MPEP §2142, in order to establish a prima facie case of obviousness "...there must be some suggestion or motivation, either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art, to modify the reference or to combine reference teachings." Applicants respectfully submit that the Examiner has not met this burden in order to establish prima facie obviousness.

The Examiner attempts to combine selecting a map portion of Johnson et al. with, for example, a select item list 412 as shown in FIG. 69 of Hayashida et al., when no such combination has been suggested by either reference.

In view of the above, Applicants submit that Claim 1 is patentably distinct over Johnson, whether taken alone or in combination with Hayashida et al.

Claims 2-7, 9-12, 14, 22-24, and 28-30 depend from and thus include the limitations of Claim 1. Thus, Applicants submit that Claims 2-7, 9-12, 14, 21-24, and 28-30 are patentably distinct over the cited references at least for the reasons discussed above in conjunction with Claim 1.

Applicants submit that amended Claims 2 and 3 is further patentably distinct over Johnson, whether taken alone or in combination with Hayashida et al. at al., since the cited references neither describe nor suggest "... the information presented in the symbol expansion

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display includes at least one of one or more symbol expansion graphics and one or more symbol expansion data...," as set forth in amended Claims 2 and 3. Claims 2 and 3 describe further details of the presenting the symbol expansion display recited in Claim 1. In his Office Action, the Examiner recognizes that Johnson et al. does not teach the claimed symbol expansion display. Applicants submit that if Johnson does not teach the claimed symbol expansion display as recognized by the Examiner, then Johnson cannot teach the additional features of the symbol expansion display recited in Claims 2 and 3.

Applicants submit that amended Claim 4 is further patentably distinct over Johnson, whether taken alone or in combination with Hayashida et al. at al., since the cited references neither describe nor suggest "... the presenting comprises: relating the one or more map display symbols to one or more map symbol records retained in a computer memory, each containing record components; selecting one or more record components from among the one or more map symbol records; formatting the one or more selected record components; and presenting the at least one of the one or more symbol expansion graphics and the one or more symbol expansion data associated with the selected record components in the symbol expansion display," as set forth in amended Claim 4. Claim 4 describes further details of the presenting the symbol expansion display recited in Claim 1. In his Office Action, the Examiner recognizes that Johnson et al. does not teach the claimed symbol expansion display. However, with regard to Claim 4, the Examiner asserts that Johnson et al. teaches a symbol expansion apparatus and method at column 4, lines 18-65. Applicants submit that if Johnson does not teach the claimed symbol expansion display as recognized by the Examiner, then Johnson cannot teach the additional features of the symbol expansion display recited in Claim 4.

Claims 5 and 6 depend from and thus include the limitations of Claim 4. Thus, Applicants submit that Claims 5 and 6 are patentably distinct over the cited references at least for the reasons discussed above in conjunction with Claim 4.

Applicants submit that Claim 7 is further patentably distinct over Johnson, whether taken alone or in combination with Hayashida et al. at al., since the cited references neither

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describe nor suggest "... filtering the record data of the one or more map symbol records to provide the one or more symbol expansion data corresponding to a selected record data type..." as set forth in Claim 7. As described above in conjunction with Claim 1, the symbol expansion data can form a part of the symbol expansion display. Furthermore, the claimed filtering is associated with the presenting the symbol expansion display of Claim 1. In his Office Action, the Examiner recognizes that Johnson et al. does not teach the claimed symbol expansion display. With regard to Claim 7, the Examiner asserts that Johnson et al. teaches the claimed symbol expansion method and apparatus at column 3, lines 43-55. Applicants submit that if Johnson does not teach the claimed symbol expansion display as recognized by the Examiner, then Johnson cannot teach the additional features of the symbol expansion display recited in Claim 7.

Applicants submit that Claim 9 is further patentably distinct over Johnson, whether taken alone or in combination with Hayashida et al. at al., since the cited references neither describe nor suggest "... filtering the record data of the one or more map symbol records to provide the one or more symbol expansion data corresponding to a selected record data range," as set forth in Claim 9. The claimed filtering is associated with the presenting the symbol expansion display recited in Claim 1. In his Office Action, the Examiner recognizes that Johnson et al. does not teach the claimed symbol expansion display. With regard to Claim 9, the Examiner asserts that Johnson et al. teaches the claimed symbol expansion method and apparatus at column 3, lines 43-55. Applicants submit that if Johnson does not teach the claimed symbol expansion display as recognized by the Examiner, then Johnson cannot teach the additional features of the symbol expansion display recited in Claim 9.

Applicants submit that Claim 10 is further patentably distinct over Johnson, whether taken alone or in combination with Hayashida et al. at al., since the cited references neither describe nor suggest "... algorithmically combining map symbol records to provide the one or more symbol expansion data," as set forth in Claim 10. The claimed algorithmically combining and the claimed symbol expansion data are associated with the presenting the symbol expansion display recited in Claim 1. In his Office Action, the Examiner recognizes that

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Johnson et al. does not teach the claimed symbol expansion display. With regard to Claim 9, the Examiner asserts that Johnson et al. teaches the claimed symbol expansion method and apparatus at column 3, lines 25-35. Applicants submit that if Johnson does not teach the claimed symbol expansion display as recognized by the Examiner, then Johnson cannot teach the additional features of the symbol expansion display recited in Claim 10.

Applicants submit that Claim 12 is *further* patentably distinct over Johnson whether taken alone or in combination with Hayashida et al., since the cited references neither describe nor suggest "... presenting the symbol expansion display, movable by the user on the computer maps display," as set forth in Claim 12. The claimed movable by a user is a feature of the claimed symbol expansion display. In his Office Action, the Examiner recognizes that Johnson et al. does not teach the claimed symbol expansion display. With regard to Claim 12, the Examiner asserts that Johnson et al. teaches the claimed symbol expansion method and apparatus at column 2, lines 60-67. Applicants submit that if Johnson does not teach the claimed symbol expansion display as recognized by the Examiner, then Johnson cannot teach the additional features of the symbol expansion display recited in Claim 12.

Column 2, lines 60-67 of Johnson, used by the Examiner to show the claimed symbol expansion display, which is movable by a user, recites:

FIG. 1 is a block diagram of a GIS embodying the present invention for displaying map symbology. Analyst 10 interacts with the GIS 12 to display maps and map symbology. The GIS 12 includes a screen 14 for displaying a map 15 and map symbols 16, a computer 18 for controlling map displays on the screen 14, and a data base 20 containing the map symbols 16 that define the map 15.

Applicants fail to find in Johnson et al. any mention of any display element movable by a user on a computer map display as asserted by the Examiner.

Applicants submit that amended Claim 14 is further patentably distinct over Johnson, whether taken alone or in combination with Hayashida et al. at al., since the cited references

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neither describe nor suggest "... the presenting comprises: presenting a lead line from the map portion to the symbol expansion display, wherein the lead line moves in accordance with the position of the symbol expansion display," as set forth in amended Claim 14. An exemplary lead line is shown in FIG. 1 as lead line 66. The claimed presenting as lead line is associated with a symbol expansion display as claimed. In his Office Action, the Examiner recognizes that Johnson et al. does not teach the claimed symbol expansion display. With regard to Claim 14, the Examiner asserts that Johnson et al. teaches the claimed symbol expansion method and apparatus having a lead line at column 3, lines 5-13. Applicants submit that if Johnson does not teach the claimed symbol expansion display as recognized by the Examiner, then Johnson cannot teach the additional features of the symbol expansion display recited in Claim 14.

Column 3, lines 5-13 of Johnson, used by the Examiner to show the claimed symbol expansion display, which has a lead line, recites:

The data base also stores the boundary coordinates 30 of the entire map, and the boundary coordinates 32 of the portion of the map which is displayed on the screen. The boundary coordinates define the size or extent of the map. The computer 18 includes a zoom function 34 that allows the user to display different portions and scales of the map, and a symbol display algorithm 36 for controlling the manipulation and display of symbols 16 from the point feature records 22 to the screen 14.

Applicants fail to find in Johnson et al. any mention of a lead line as asserted by the Examiner.

Applicants submit that Claim 22 is further patentably distinct over Johnson, whether taken alone or in combination with Hayashida et al. at al., since the cited references neither describe nor suggest "... the computer map display is displayed at a first scale and the symbol expansion display is displayed concurrently with the computer map display at the first scale," as set forth in Claim 22. In his Office Action, the Examiner recognizes that Johnson et al. does not teach the claimed symbol expansion display. With regard to Claim 22, the Examiner asserts that Johnson et al. teaches the

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claimed symbol expansion method and apparatus having a symbol expansion display at column 5, lines 20-27. Applicants submit that if Johnson does not teach the claimed symbol expansion display as recognized by the Examiner, then Johnson cannot teach the additional features of the symbol expansion display recited in Claim 22.

Applicants submit that amended Claim 23 is further patentably distinct over Johnson, whether taken alone or in combination with Hayashida et al. at al., since the cited references neither describe nor suggest "...the information presented in the symbol expansion display includes at least one of one or more symbol expansion graphics and one or more symbol expansion data, and wherein at least one of the one or more symbol expansion graphics is associated with a lower level of hierarchy of one of the one or more map display symbols," as set forth in amended Claim 23. The claimed symbol expansion graphics and symbol expansion data are associated with the claimed symbol expansion display. In his Office Action, the Examiner recognizes that Johnson et al. does not teach the claimed symbol expansion display. With regard to Claim 23, the Examiner asserts that Johnson et al. teaches the claimed symbol expansion method and apparatus having symbol expansion graphics associated with a lower level of hierarchy at column 5, lines 41-51. Applicants submit that if Johnson does not teach the claimed symbol expansion display as recognized by the Examiner, then Johnson cannot teach the additional features of the symbol expansion display recited in Claim 23.

Column 5, lines 41-67 of Johnson, used by the Examiner to show the claimed symbol expansion graphics associated with a lower level of hierarchy, recites:

In step 80, the computer determines an initial level of symbology for the hierarchical structures, based on the computed map scale. The map scale provides a rough estimate of the symbol resolution required to adequately display the map features. By entering the hierarchy at an intermediate level as opposed to the highest level, the number of computations and execution time can be reduced. The method for selecting the initial level errs on the side of the higher level or finer symbol resolution. Starting at too high a level will only increase the number of

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computations, but starting at too low a level will provide a level of symbology that is unnecessarily coarse.

In the hierarchical structures, the top level is labelled level 1, the next level down level 2, and so on. To select an initial hierarchical level from which to begin the declutter process, the value for the map scale is simply rounded up to the next highest integer unless the scale is exactly equal to an integer value, in which case it remains as that integer value. For example, if the entire map was displayed the scale would equal exactly one and the symbology at level one in the hierarchical structure would be selected. If the scale equalled 2.3, this value would be rounded up to 3 and the records corresponding to the third level of the hierarchical structure would be selected. In step 82, the computer retrieves the hierarchical records at the selected level and the corresponding numeric records from the data base.

As typified by underlined portion above and also by FIG. 2b of Johnson, Applicants respectfully point out that Johnson uses higher numbers to indicate lower levels of hierarchy. Applicants submit that the phrase "lower level of hierarchy" recited in claim 23 is used both by Johnson and in the present application to indicate a physical direction in a hierarchy tree. For example, in FIG. 2b of Johnson, the lowest level of hierarchy is shown to be physically at the bottom of the hierarchy tree, though it is indicated in Johnson to have the highest level number (four).

The present invention provides the claimed symbol expansion display, which, in some arrangements, can have symbol expansion graphics and/or symbol expansion data at a lower level of hierarchy than the claimed map display symbols presented on a computer map display. As described above, the symbol expansion display tends to expand information to make the information more easily visible, which would otherwise be crowded on the computer map display, or not displayed at all. The symbol expansion display can provide the claimed lower level of hierarchy as expanded information. In contrast, Johnson attempts to provide the map display symbols themselves at a higher level of hierarchy, which tends to compress information, i.e., which tends to combine multiple symbols, which would otherwise be crowded on the map display, into a single map display symbol.

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For substantially the same reasons described above in conjunction with Claim 23, Applicants submit that amended Claim 24 is further patentably distinct over Johnson, whether taken alone or in combination with Hayashida et al. at al., since the cited references neither describe nor suggest "...the information presented in the symbol expansion display includes at least one of one or more symbol expansion graphics and one or more symbol expansion data, and wherein at least one of the one or more symbol expansion data is associated with a lower level of hierarchy of one of the one or more map display symbols," as set forth in amended Claim 24.

Applicants have amended Claim 17 herein in an effort to improve the clarity as will be apparent, and not for reasons of patentability. Some phrases in Claim 1 have been moved.

For substantially the same reasons described above in conjunction with Claim 1, Applicants submit that amended Claim 17 is patentably distinct over Johnson et al., whether taken alone or in combination with Hayashida et al., since the cited references neither describe nor suggest "...a selection device to select...a map portion containing one or more map display symbols, wherein the one or more map display symbols include map display symbols selected from among one or more de-cluttered map display symbols and two or more cluttered map display symbols; and a presentation processor, which presents, on the computer map display, in response to selecting the map portion, a symbol expansion display having information associated with the one or more map display symbols, wherein the symbol expansion display is displayed concurrently with the one or more map display symbols," as set forth in amended Claim 17.

Claims 18-21, 25-27, and 31-33 depend from and thus include the limitations of Claim 17. Thus, Applicants submit that Claims 18-21, 25-27, and 31-33 are patentably distinct over the cited references generally for the reasons discussed above in conjunction with Claims 17.

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Applicants submit that amended Claim 18 is further patentably distinct over Johnson et al., since the cited reference neither describes nor suggests "...a display processor, which receives and formats each of the one or more selected record components for presenting at least one of one or more symbol expansion graphics and one or more symbol expansion data in the symbol expansion display in combination with the one or more map display symbols," as set forth in amended Claim 18. The claimed display processor is associated with the claimed symbol expansion display. In his Office Action, the Examiner recognizes that Johnson et al. does not teach the claimed symbol expansion display. With regard to Claim 18, the Examiner asserts that Johnson et al. teaches the claimed symbol expansion method and apparatus having the display processor at column 7, lines 20-27. Applicants submit that if Johnson does not teach the claimed symbol expansion display as recognized by the Examiner, then Johnson cannot teach the additional features of the symbol expansion display recited in Claim 18.

For substantially the same reasons described above in conjunction with Claim 12, Applicants submit that Claim 20 is further patentably distinct over Johnson et al., since the cited reference neither describes nor suggests "... the presentation processor comprises: means for providing the symbol expansion display, movable by the user on the computer map display," as set forth in Claim 20.

For substantially the same reasons described above in conjunction with Claim 22, Applicants submit that Claim 25 is further patentably distinct over Johnson et al., since the cited reference neither describes nor suggests "... the computer map display is displayed at a first scale and the symbol expansion display is displayed concurrently with the computer map display at the first scale," as set forth in Claim 25.

For substantially the same reasons described above in conjunction with Claim 23, Applicants submit that amended Claim 26 is further patentably distinct over Johnson et al., since the cited reference neither describes nor suggests "...the information presented in the symbol expansion display includes at least one of one or more symbol expansion graphics and one or more symbol expansion data, and wherein at least one of the one or more symbol

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expansion graphics is associated with a lower level of hierarchy of one of the one or more map display symbols," as set forth in amended Claim 26.

For substantially the same reasons described above in conjunction with Claims 23 and 24, Applicants submit that Claim 27 is further patentably distinct over Johnson et al., since the cited reference neither describes nor suggests "... the information presented in the symbol expansion display includes at least one of one or more symbol expansion graphics and one or more symbol expansion data, and wherein at least one of the one or more symbol expansion data is associated with a lower level of hierarchy of one of the one or more map display symbols," as set forth in Claim 27.

In view of the above, Applicants submit that the rejection of Claims 1-7, 9-12, and 17-33 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) should be removed.

The Claim Objections

The Examiner objects to Claims 8, 13, 15, and 16 as being dependent upon rejected base claims, but indicates that Claims 8, 13, 15, and 16 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claims and any intervening claims.

For the above reasons, Applicants submit that independent Claim 1, from which Claim 8, 13, 15, and 16 depend, is patentably distinct over the cited references. Therefore, Applicants submit that Claims 8, 13, 15, and 16 are allowable in their present dependent form.

In view of the above Amendment and Remarks, Applicants submit that the claims and the entire case are in condition for allowance and should be sent to issue and such action is respectfully requested.

It is submitted that this Amendment places the application in condition for allowance or in better form for consideration on appeal, and thus, entry of this amendment is respectfully requested under the provisions of 37 C.F.R. §1.116.

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The Examiner is respectfully invited to telephone the undersigning attorney if there are any questions regarding this Amendment or this application.

The Assistant Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge payment of any additional fees associated with this communication or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 500845, including but not limited to, any charges for extensions of time under 37 C.F.R. §1.136.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: June 10, 2005

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